



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/942,978	08/31/2001	Ken Kutaragi	100809-16279 (SCEW 18.968	7677
26304 7590 06/22/2007 KATTEN MUCHIN ROSENMAN LLP 575 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10022-2585			EXAMINER VAN HANDEL, MICHAEL P	
			ART UNIT 2623	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 06/22/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	09/942,978		KUTARAGI ET AL.	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Michael Van Handel		2623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 March 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 2623

DETAILED ACTION

Miscellaneous

1. Please note that the examiner of record has changed.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/19/2007 has been entered.

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Response to Amendment

1. This action is responsive to an Amendment filed 3/19/2007. Claims 1-12 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 11 are amended.

Response to Arguments

Art Unit: 2623

1. Applicant's arguments regarding claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 11, filed 3/19/2007, have been considered, but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

1. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

2. Claims 9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101, because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Referring to claims 9 and 11, the claims are directed to a computer program. The examiner notes that computer programs constitute functional descriptive material; however, functional descriptive material is nonstatutory when claimed as descriptive material *per se*. When functional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium, it becomes structurally and functionally interrelated to the medium and will be statutory in most cases since use of technology permits the function of the descriptive material to be realized (See MPEP 2106.01).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 6, 9, 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stefik et al.

Art Unit: 2623

Referring to claims **1**, **6**, **9**, and **10**, Stefik et al. discloses a method/system/computer program for managing fees of contents in which the fees arise based on a predetermined charging rule upon distributing the contents (col. 4, l. 4-10), said method/system/computer program comprising the steps of:

- equipping information gathering means on a network (Billing Clearinghouse) with which a user terminal (computer system) is allowed to connect (col. 7, l. 5-37), said user terminal carrying out information processing by utilizing said contents (col. 7, l. 66-67; col. 8, l. 1-18, 57-67; col. 9, l. 1-5; & Figs. 3, 4b);
- embedding digital information to said contents (col. 7, l. 7-10; col. 10, l. 8-11; & col. 11, l. 44-52), said digital information itself providing functionality to said user terminal to autonomously transmit a contents distributing history to said information gathering means at a predetermined timing while said user terminal is connected with said network (col. 8, l. 10-20, 57-67; col. 9, l. 1-5; col. 18, l. 12-45; & Fig. 3);
- distributing said contents with said digital information being embedded through a predetermined distribution mechanism (col. 4, l. 4-8; col. 10, l. 8-11; col. 11, l. 31-56; col. 22, l. 20-27; col. 45, l. 20-67; col. 46, l. 1-67; col. 47, l. 1-67; & col. 48, l. 1-45);
- holding, by predetermined identification information holding means, identification information for identifying said distributed contents and said distribution mechanism (col. 8, l. 4-9; col. 10, l. 24-34, 45-67; col. 11, l. 1-13; col. 17, l. 48-67; & col. 18, l. 1-45);
- counting a distribution condition of contents per distribution mechanism based on said contents distributing history gathered through said information gathering means

Art Unit: 2623

and said identification information held by said identification information holding means (col. 10, l. 8-11, 24-34, 45-67; col. 11, l. 1-13; col. 47, l. 30-45; & Fig. 14); and

- determining a charging amount per distribution mechanism based on said counted distribution condition and a charging rule for said contents (col. 17, l. 48-60; col. 18, l. 1-45, 60-65; col. 32, l. 66-67; col. 33, l. 1-9; & col. 47, l. 30-45).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 2-5, 7, 8, 11, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stefik et al. in view of Aras et al.

Referring to claims 2, 4, 7, 11, and 12, Stefik et al. discloses a method/system/computer program for managing fees of contents in which the fees arise based on a predetermined charging rule upon utilizing the contents, said method comprising the steps of:

- issuing a recording medium to a user operating a user terminal which carries out information processing by utilizing said contents (col. 17, l. 31-36 & col. 18, l. 24-38), said recording medium having a data recording area in which user identification data is recorded (col. 13, l. 51-54, 59-67) and a memory area (col. 14, l. 28-39);

Art Unit: 2623

- equipping information gathering means on a network with which said user terminal with said recording medium being loaded is allowed to connect (col. 7, l. 5-37);
- embedding digital information to said contents, said digital information itself providing functionality to said user terminal to autonomously store a contents utilizing history indicating utilizing condition of the contents to said memory area, and read said stored contents utilizing history so as to transmit said contents utilizing history to said information gathering means along with said user identification data at a predetermined timing while said user terminal is connected with said network (col. 8, l. 4-9, 10-20, 57-67; col. 9, l. 1-5; col. 10, l. 24-34, 45-67; col. 11, l. 1-13; col. 17, l. 48-67; col. 18, l. 1-45; & Fig. 3);
- distributing said contents with said digital information being embedded through a predetermined distribution mechanism (col. 4, l. 4-8; col. 10, l. 8-11; col. 11, l. 31-56; col. 22, l. 20-27; col. 45, l. 20-67; col. 46, l. 1-67; col. 47, l. 1-67; & col. 48, l. 1-45);
- holding, by predetermined identification information holding means, identification information for identifying said distributed contents and said distribution mechanism (col. 8, l. 4-9; col. 10, l. 24-34, 45-67; col. 11, l. 1-13; col. 17, l. 48-67; & col. 18, l. 1-45);
- counting a utilization condition of the contents per user based on the contents utilizing history and the user identification data gathered through said information gathering means (col. 10, l. 8-11, 24-34, 45-67; col. 11, l. 1-13; col. 47, l. 30-45; & Fig. 14); and

Art Unit: 2623

- determining a charging amount per user based on said counted utilization condition and a charging rule for said contents (col. 17, l. 48-60; col. 18, l. 1-45, 60-65; col. 32, l. 66-67; col. 33, l. 1-9; & col. 47, l. 30-45).

Stefik et al. does not specifically disclose that the memory area of the data recording area be a nonvolatile memory area. Aras et al. discloses a method and apparatus for monitoring audio-visual materials presented to a subscriber (col. 6, l. 32-52). Monitored audio-visual information is stored in a Behavior Collection Table (BCT)(col. 9, l. 2-11). The BCT table is stored to a non-volatile memory, such as a flash memory (col. 16, l. 46-49). The collected information is then sent to a Behavior Collection Center (BCC) for processing (col. 12, l. 40-54). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made to modify the memory of Stefik et al. to be a non-volatile memory, such as that taught by Aras et al. in order to retain data in a power off event (col. 16, l. 34-49).

Referring to claims 3 and 5, the combination of Stefik et al. and Aras et al. teaches a method for managing fees of contents according to claims 2 and 4, respectively, further comprising the steps of encrypting the contents to be distributed and issuing key information for decrypting said encrypted contents, said key information being recorded in said recording medium (Stefik et al. col. 28, l. 1-37).

Referring to claim 8, the combination of Stefik et al. and Aras et al. teaches a system for managing fees of contents according to claim 7, wherein said recording medium is a card equipped with an IC chip (col. 14, l. 7-50 & col. 17, l. 32-36), said card being individualized per user (col. 13, l. 51-67), and information indispensable for utilizing said contents is recorded in said card (col. 28, l. 28-30).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kenyon et al. discloses a player-centric method and apparatus for creating, distributing, and consuming content.

Lafer et al. discloses a method and system for managing multimedia assets for proper deployment on interactive networks.

Rose et al. discloses a computerized multimedia asset management system.

Gordon et al. discloses a system for managing the addition/deletion of media assets within a network based on usage and media asset metadata.

Mohan et al. discloses a method for describing media assets for their management.

Downs et al. discloses a method and apparatus of securely providing content to a user's system.

Chiu et al. discloses a database-independent, scalable, object-oriented architecture and API for managing digital multimedia assets.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Van Handel whose telephone number is 571-272-5968. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am-5:30pm Mon.-Fri..

Art Unit: 2623

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chris Kelley can be reached on 571-272-7331. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MVH



SCOTT E. BELIVEAU
PRIMARY PATENT EXAMINER